

LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **November 23, 2004, Work Session**

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 3

CONSENT:

REGULAR: **X**

CLOSED SESSION:

(Confidential)

ACTION:

INFORMATION: **X**

ITEM TITLE: **Briefing on the Crosstown Connector Project**

RECOMMENDATION: None at this time.

SUMMARY: Staff will provide a briefing to Council on the history, purpose and status of the Crosstown Connector project. Since Council approved the design of Phase I of the project in June significant design issues have arisen and the projected cost of the project has escalated sharply. In addition, we have just received a proposal to construct the road, and others, under the Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA).

While we will not be in a position to provide substantive comment on the PPTA proposal on Tuesday, Council will be provided a detailed briefing on the project. Attached are an outline of the presentation and maps of the project corridor.

PRIOR ACTION(S): The history of Council action on this project goes back to 1986 and is outlined in the attached document.

FISCAL IMPACT: To be determined. See attachment.

CONTACT(S): Kimball Payne

ATTACHMENT(S): Presentation outline, corridor maps, aerial photo.

REVIEWED BY: lkp

CROSTOWN CONNECTOR

Presentation Outline November 23, 2004

I. Project description

Phase I: Expressway @ Kemper St. to just west of Lynchburg College entrance near Old Forest Rd.—2.01 miles

Phase II: Lynchburg College to 501 Expressway at Rt. 221/Old Forest Rd.—2.28 miles

Past references to Phase III: Grade separated interchange to replace the Rt. 221/501 Expressway/Old Forest Rd. intersection.

Even further back, old Phase II: Rt. 221 from the Expressway to the Bedford County line (tied in with a VDOT project to widen 221)--completed

II. Purpose/Need/Utility

1999: "Create an efficient, direct route from Route 29 to 501 Bypass/Old Forest Rd. Provide relief for many residential/business streets from heavy crosstown traffic."

Nov. '99: support the traffic increases coming into the City from the Bedford Area; support the Kemper St. Development Project (never completed as originally conceived); support the development of the City's medical facilities in the area around Lynchburg General Hospital.

Have also been told that the project will promote economic development into the center city area (Plaza, hospital); will provide a quick easy way downtown from Forest (edge city) and for City businesses to access clients in Forest. [Should call it the "Inner City Access" project rather than the Crosstown Connector.]

Other opportunities include: correcting capacity and safety issues (e.g. Oakley Ave., Wyndale Dr./Forest Brook Dr.—McConnville Dr area, Memorial/Park); improving aesthetics; promoting Plaza redevelopment; improving access to the hospital; fixing the Lynchburg College entrance; addressing deferred maintenance in the corridor; fixing the Norfolk Southern RR tunnel; and CSO.

III. Design considerations

New 4-lane facility with curb/gutter and sidewalks, with turn lanes at selected intersections; 35 mph design speed, LOS “C” in design year (originally LOS “B”)

Raised grass medians, street trees, brick sidewalks, grass strips, crosswalks; decorative period lighting, stone walls (Miller Park & E.C. Glass).

Intent is to create a neighborhood friendly, pedestrian friendly, pleasing boulevard rather than a concrete and asphalt barrier through the center of the City. Design changes in 1999 probably slowed project and increased costs.

Aesthetic improvements don’t start until Park Avenue due to limited room for right-of-way acquisition.

Traffic projections: 1996: 15-20,000 ADT projected to increase to 30,000
1997: 1995 19800 ADT—projected 37700 by 2022,
five year (2002) projection, 28180
current ADT 23000 with a projection of 43000 in
design year (2028)

Traffic projections do not take into account the effect of the opening of the Madison Heights Bypass in Dec 2005—20,000 vehicles per day removed from the Expressway; will also shift the primary entrance to the City to the Campbell Ave. / Rt. 460 Interchange

IV. History of Council Action

March, 1986 Resolution requesting VDOT to establish an Urban Highway Project: “Improvements to Kemper Street, Park Avenue and Lakeside Drive on the Crosstown Connector from the Lynchburg Expressway (Route 29) to the west corporate limits.”

January, 1990 dedication of right of way at Miller Park: 30 foot wide strip along Park Avenue from Langhorne Rd. to Euclid Ave.

June 1990 request that VDOT commence the advance acquisition of right-of-way for the proposed interchange at Route 501 and Route 221.

1991 Preliminary Plan review

Various appropriations throughout the years (12/1990, 12/1992, 5/1998)

(Subsequently, funds were diverted from the CTC project to resurfacing the Expressway, improvements for Frito Lay, and Enterprise Dr.)

November 1999 Council adopted Urban priorities as 1) Breezewood Dr., 2) CTC Phase I, 3) CTC Phase II, 4) Odd Fellows Road Extension/460 Interchange, 5) Interchange at 501/221

VDOT Design Public Hearing June 2003 (issues arose afterwards)

June 2004 Council approved Phase I design

V. Stakeholders: Interests

Public: access to and from the center city; safety improvements

City: maintenance (\$3.5 million in improvements needed: traffic signals, intersections, wooden bridges, paving), economic development, CSO, utility work (past references to water line improvements planned in the project corridor)

VDOT: Lynchburg District office still wants to do the R/W acquisition work even if the City decides to use a PPTA (paucity of work in this district due to payback on Madison Heights Bypass)

Centra Health: 1999 letter from George Dawson to Chuck Church indicating the need for direct access from LGH to the CTC; difficulty getting to and from LGH (one way in, another way out), growth of patient base to the east and south; concern about aesthetics of the approach, commitment to \$180 million investment on the LGH site as the primary inpatient site based in part on assurances of the Crosstown Connector; 90% of patients from outside the City (which make up 60% of total) use an access that will intersect some part of Phase I—which is the most critical section from their perspective;

Lynchburg College: entrance, College Lake

Property Owners: access to their properties, parking, property value

The Plaza: redevelopment, access

Norfolk Southern RR: problems with tunnel under Park Ave.; opportunity to eliminate

Chamber of Commerce: in the past has expressed support for the project as a top priority

Local PPTA Consortium: opportunity for local engineering and contracting firms (no money to construct any roads in the State Primary system for a number of years given current VDOT funding)

VI. Cost History

1999: Phase I--\$12.5 million
Phase II--\$8.4 million
Phase III--\$16.2 million

2004/2005 VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program:
Phase I--\$24.984 million
Phase II—not in Program except for PE and RW--\$5.3 million
(2003/2004--\$20.723 million)

Nov., 2004: Phase I--\$27.2 million (2008 ad date)
Phase II--\$28.4 million (2015 ad date)

VII. Funding Allocation History and Projections

Project is planned to be funded 98% by VDOT allocation, 2% local funds

If inflation is 5% a year, the annual VDOT allocation (about \$3 million) will not be able to keep up with future construction cost estimates for both projects (Phase I would cost \$33.1 million and Phase II would cost \$48.6 million by projected ad dates = \$81.7 million total)

Past allocations have been higher and there is no guarantee that future allocations will remain at the current level.

Current VDOT allocation, through FY 2005: Phase I--\$16.626 million
Phase II--\$5.374 million

Future allocations are between \$2.3-2.9 million (declining) a year.

Estimated total allocations through FY 2010: Phase I--\$25 million
Phase II--\$11 million

If the City wanted to proceed with both phases under a public/private partnership would have to borrow approximately \$24 million; could possibly pledge future VDOT allocations to repay over 8 years (through 2018) but there is no guarantee that the allocation will remain at the current level and it would mean that no other major road projects would be built in the City for those 8 years.

VIII. Competing Projects for VDOT Funds Allocated to City

Interchange at 501 Expressway/Rt. 221/Old Forest Road: \$20 million+

Odd Fellows Road Interchange at Rt. 460: 1999 est. \$20 million; today >\$25 million est. (partially a Primary project; possibility of Federal funding, Campbell County participation)

Wards Road: \$?? Million (never included in any City priority list)

Candler's Mountain Road (Primary project): 1999 est. \$13.5 million

IX. Challenges

\$Money\$—increasing costs, decreasing funds

Drainage/CSO

Utilities

Norfolk Southern RR Bridge -- \$6-7 million (\$2.2 million currently in project budget)

College Lake Dam

Oakley Ave. design

Interim analysis and design

Schedule (Phase II PH scheduled for March 2005)

Traffic management during construction

PPTA coordination – City administration of the project

X. Unanswered questions

- Does the proposed design provide the desired utility at a reasonable cost?
- What does the City need/want as compared to its ability to pay?
- Will the design promote stable neighborhoods and economic revitalization?
- Is a PPTA the best way to build the project?
- What would a detailed and updated traffic study show (CORSIM study; detailed traffic study of the entire corridor)?
- Will there be future General Assembly funding to pay for the project?

XI. Project Alternatives

- Construct Phase I and Phase II as designed (\$60 million+)
- Switch the timeline for constructing the phases: do Phase II before Phase I
- Construct Phase I to the bridge at College Lake only
- Construct Phase II to Memorial Avenue only

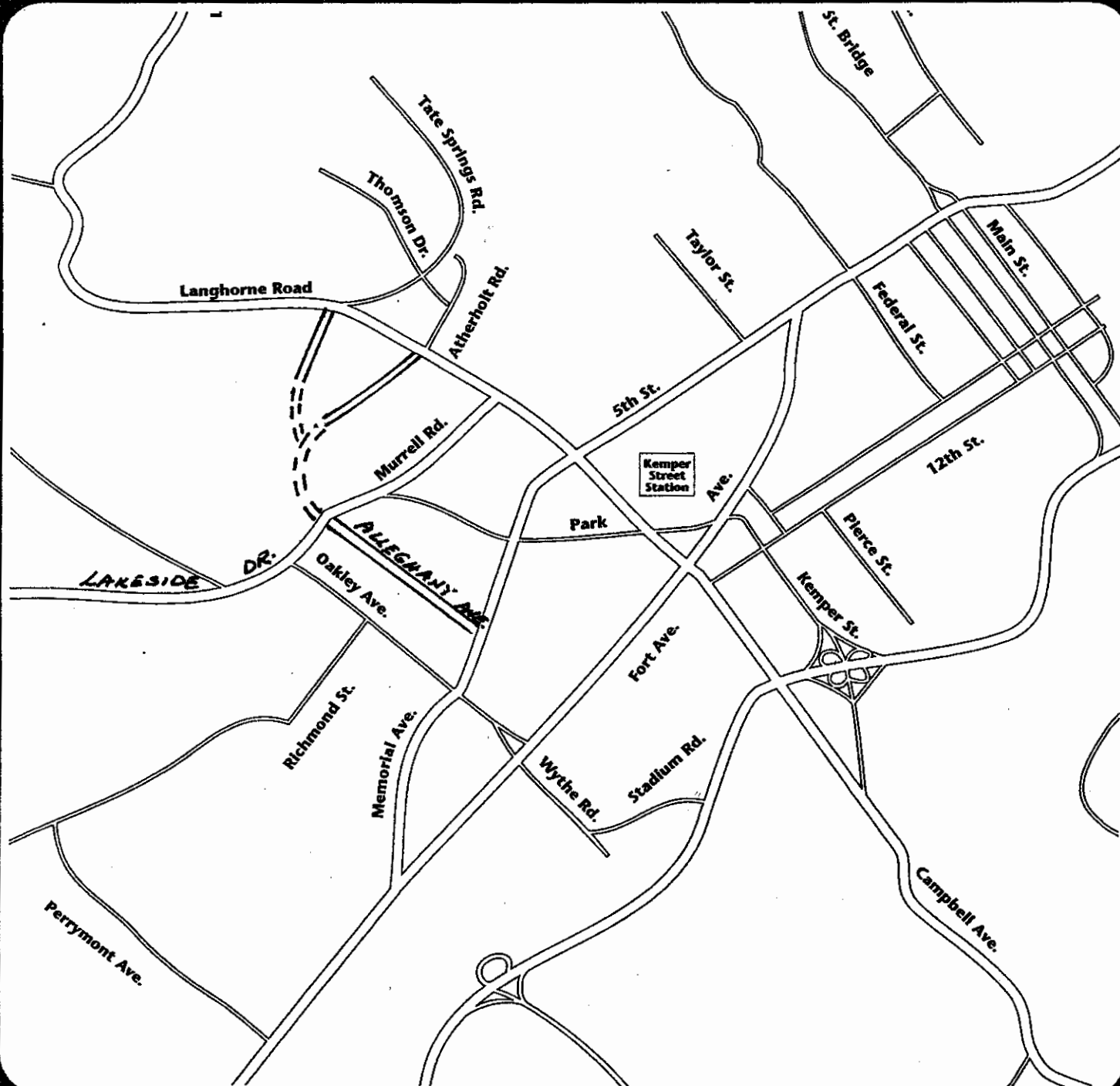
- Construct spot improvements throughout the corridor, especially at selected intersections, to improve safety or functionality (improvements may overlap)
- Do nothing—move the funding elsewhere—not really an option—VDOT would probably seek reimbursement of costs incurred so far (\$4.5 million)—spot improvements could overcome this
- Take a breather and consider the design and utility of the CTC in concert with the development of the Midtown/Plaza Area Master Plan; conduct an origin and destination study to determine the most efficient and effective ways to access LGH and then take immediate steps to address signage and traffic routing improvements

XII. Current Project Timetable

Construction Ad Dates: Phase I—2008
 Phase II—2015

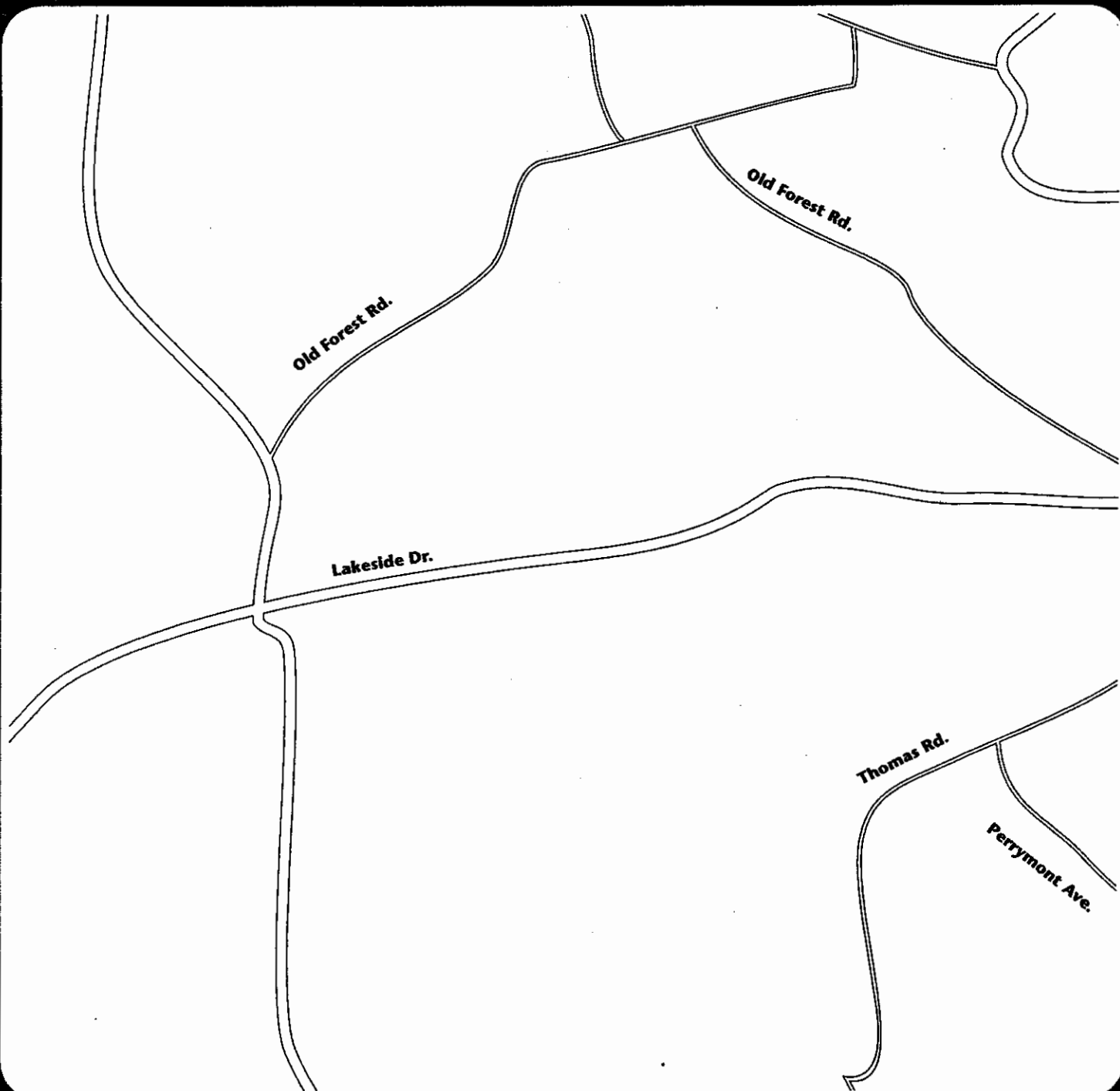
PPTA proposal suggests both phases could be constructed by late 2009.

Crosstown Connector (phase 1): Kemper to LC



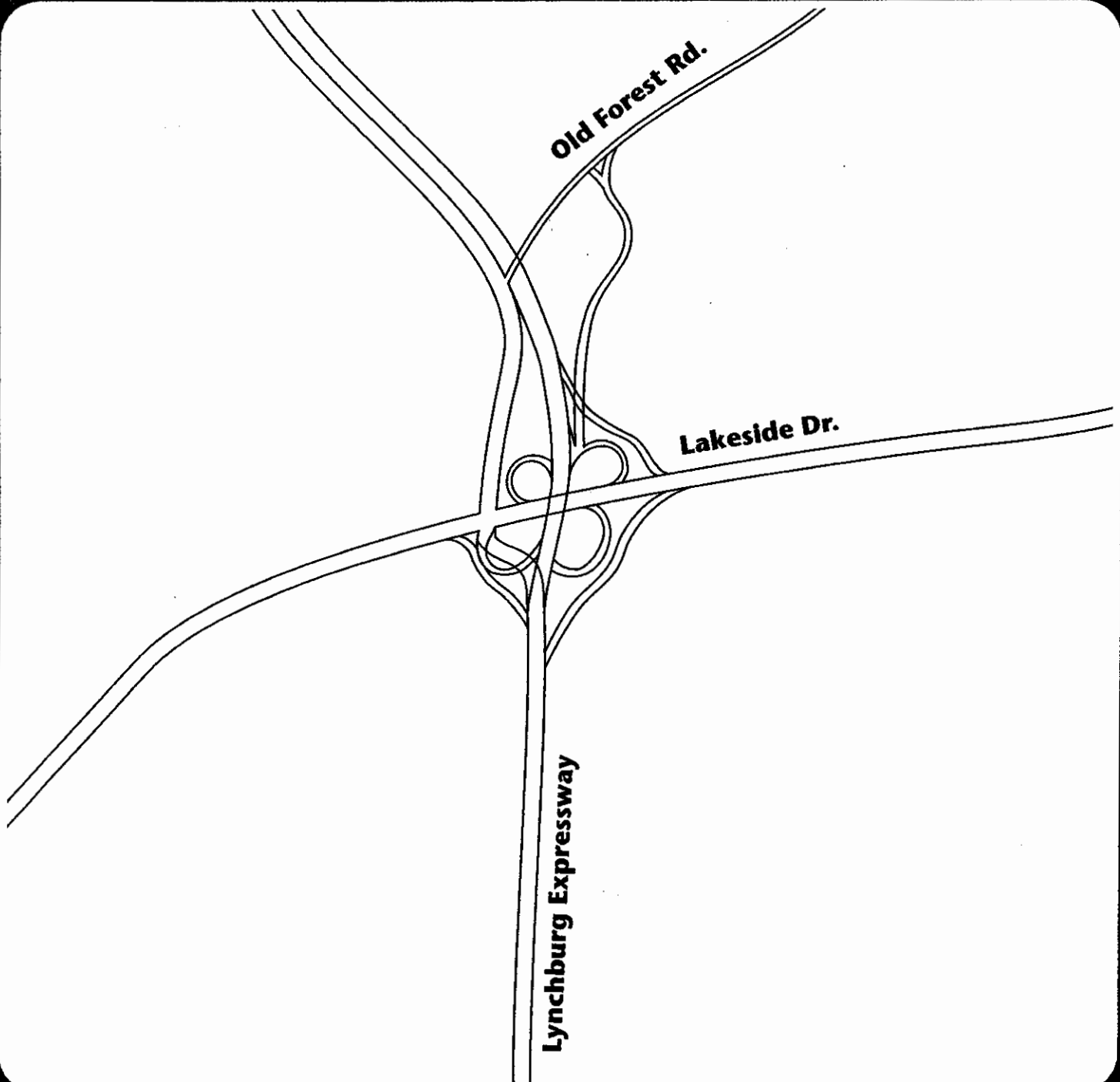
- Urban project
- Creates an efficient, direct route from Route 29 to 501 bypass/Old Forest Rd.
- Provides relief for many residential/business streets from heavy crosstown traffic

Crosstown Connector (phase 2): LC to 501



- Urban project
- Creates an efficient, direct route from Route 29 to 501 Bypass/Old Forest Rd.
- Provides many residential/business streets with relief from heavy crosstown traffic

Lakeside Drive / Lynchburg Expressway Interchange



- Urban Project
- Improves traffic flow and increase safety at Lakeside Drive / Lynchburg Expressway
- Provides for traffic generated by future growth in industrial and commercial developments

